

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

SIXTH STREET AT CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW WASHINGTON DC 20565 • REpublic 7-4215 extension 248

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Washington, D.C., June 6, 1965. John Walker, Director of the National Gallery of Art, announced today the opening of "SKETCHES BY CONSTABLE from the Victoria and Albert Museum". The exhibition, comprising 24 oil sketches and 52 drawings and watercolors, will be on view at the Gallery from 2:00 p.m. today through July 5.

John Constable (1776-1837) revolutionized the art of landscape painting, and brought to it freshness and spontaneity. Many qualities which are generally believed to have originated with the French Impressionists are in fact first found in the work of this most natural of English painters. The most spontaneous of all his works are the preparatory drawings and sketches in which he worked out the problems posed by the large finished landscape paintings to be seen in so many major public collections.

The sketches, however, are mainly in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, and this exhibition represents the first time that a comprehensive selection of Constable's preparatory work has ever been seen in this country.

During Constable's lifetime, the preparatory sketches were never allowed out of the artist's collection. In 1888, over 50 years after Constable's death, his last surviving child, Miss Isabel Constable, gave more than 100 oil paintings and sketches and over 300 drawings to the Victoria and Albert Museum. That year marked a revolution in the appreciation of Constable, as up to that time none of the preparatory material had been known to a wider public than a few family friends.

The exhibition has been selected from the Victoria and Albert Museum's holdings by Mr. Graham Reynolds, Keeper, Department of

(More)

Prints and Drawings, and Paintings, Victoria and Albert Museum.

Mr. Reynolds also has written the introduction and catalogue notes for the catalogue of the exhibition.

The catalogue, with 56 black-and-white illustrations, is on sale for \$1.75. The exhibition has been organized and will be circulated by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service. After opening at the National Gallery of Art, it will be seen at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Seattle Art Museum Pavilion; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the Cleveland Museum of Art; the Baltimore Museum of Art; the M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco; and the Portland Art Museum.

Black-and-white photographs and review copies of the catalogue available on request.